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Identifier: Hans-Juergen BAVING, et al.

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please replace the claims with the claims provided in the listing below wherein status, amendments, additions and cancellations are indicated.

1-9. (Cancelled)

10. (New) A coupling comprising:

a base body being partially inserted into a tube end;

a sealing element disposed on said base body;

5 a sleeve comprising axially opposing anterior and posterior sleeve parts;  
said sleeve parts each including axially opposing anterior and posterior ends and an interior surface;

said interior surface of said anterior part supporting the tube end;

said sleeve parts being permanently and fixedly connected at a radial lip;

10 a support body disposed on said posterior end of said anterior sleeve part;

said support body including an exterior positioning surface disposed at a pre-determined angle so that a radius of said surface increases toward said sleeve anterior end;

15 an annular gap disposed between said base body and said sleeve for receiving the tube end;

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said interior surface of said posterior sleeve part being spaced from said exterior positioning surface of said support body for forming a free space;

a retaining element disposed axially against and radially exterior to said support body;

5        said retaining element including a closed annular part disposed radially adjacent to said radial lip connecting said sleeve parts;

said retaining element including elastic retaining claws disposed against said exterior positioning surface of said support body for fixing the tube end to said coupling; and

10        said retaining claws being movable in said free space.

11.    (New) The coupling of claim 10, wherein:

said closed annular part of said retaining element is disposed in a plane that is orthogonal to a longitudinal axis of said sleeve; and

15        said retaining claws being disposed at an angle towards the interior of the coupling in a predetermined area of said retaining element.

12.    (New) The coupling of claim 10, wherein said sleeve parts are joined at a weld joint.

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13. (New) The coupling of claim 10, wherein said support body is an annular shoulder, and said exterior positioning surface is conical.

14. (New) The coupling of claim 10, wherein:

said retaining claws of said retaining element comprise:

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a scoop-shape; and/or

an arch shape disposed about the longitudinal axis; and/or

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a plurality of pairs of through-holes and circumferential recesses, said pairs disposed in the circumferential direction, each recess disposed radially exterior to and extending from a paired through-hole, each through-hole being substantially smaller than a paired recess.

15. (New) The coupling of claim 14, wherein:

said retaining claws include a center part connected radially to said annular part, said retaining claws including expansions disposed towards an inner edge of said claws.

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16. (New) The coupling of claim 15, wherein:

said recesses are disposed between adjacent center parts; and

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said through-holes being circumferentially disposed between said expansions of adjacent retaining elements, said through-holes being circumferentially smaller than a paired recess.

17. (New) The coupling of claim 10, wherein:

5       said base body comprises an annular groove disposed adjacent to said free end of said base body;

      said sealing element being disposed in said annular groove;

      said sealing element including anterior and posterior sections, said anterior section of said sealing element being adhesively connected to said base  
10       body; and

      said posterior section of said sealing element being movable parallel to the direction of said longitudinal axis in said annular groove.

18. (New) The coupling of claim 10, wherein said retaining claws being movable and/or spreadable in said free space when said tube end is inserted into  
15       said coupling.